

Dealing with Climate Impacts: Raising Ambition on Loss & Damage



[Watch the webinar on the topic HERE!](#)

Climate-related disasters have battered many regions this year, leaving many vulnerable developing countries with enormous damages but a limited capacity to deal with them. People's lives are being directly influenced by climate changes all over the world. In that case mitigation and adaptation isn't enough, there is also a need for mechanisms that help deal with the loss and damage that has already occurred. Loss & Damage can thus be defined as:

"Loss refers to things that are lost forever and cannot be brought back, such as human lives or species loss, while damages refers to things that are damaged, but can be repaired or restored, such as roads or embankments."

Despite being one of the key climate change issues of our time, and a priority for the negotiations at COP23, Loss and Damage did not have the ambitious outcome that was needed at the COP.

Loss & Damage at COP23 - why we need more ambition!



Loss and Damage has increasingly become a crucial issue for Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as is evidenced by the creation of the Loss and Damage work program under the **Cancun Adaptation Framework** in 2010, the establishment of the [Warsaw International Mechanism](#) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (**WIM**) in 2013, and the achievement of a separate article in the [Paris Agreement](#) 2015.

With **COP23** being hosted by a small island state, namely Fiji, vulnerable countries had placed their hopes on addressing the issue of **Loss and Damage** during the 2017 climate negotiations.

One of the main hopes for vulnerable countries during COP23 was that the discussion of Loss and Damage would be moved beyond the current, very technical negotiations to a more inclusive and political one. At the moment Loss and Damage is considered only once a year when the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM) presents its annual report. The work of the **WIM Excom** is considered to be technical, rather than political.

At the start of COP23, vulnerable developing countries, including those represented by the Group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), had – in their [opening statements](#) – called for a permanent agenda item for Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) to consider Loss and Damage at each of its sessions. These Bodies would be able to include Loss and Damage much more into

the COP negotiations, and would move the topic from the sidelines to the center of global climate change discussions.

Did the vulnerable countries succeed at COP23? Not really. Every effort to call for a new agenda item to consider Loss and Damage beyond the report of the WIM Excom was met with objections – that now was not the time for having this debate or that Loss and Damage ought not to be “politicised”. Ironically, the call for establishing a new agenda item to discuss Loss and Damage at broader scale was objected on the basis that it was too broad for current negotiations.

But a consolation prize was achieved: there will be **a broad expert dialogue on support (including finance) for Loss and Damage** at the meeting of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies in May 2018. Next May this dialogue will:

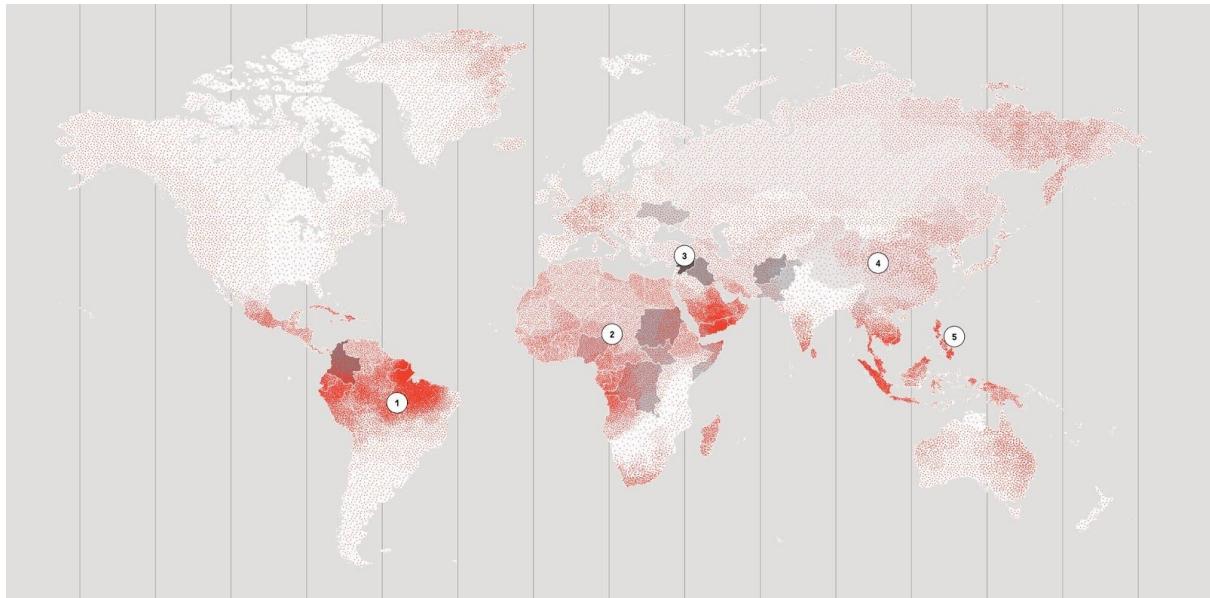
“explore a wide range of information, inputs and views on ways for facilitating the mobilisation and securing of expertise, and enhancement of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, for averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage.”

Far from being an inclusive prioritised discussion on how to deal with the current climate impacts on vulnerable countries, the topic of Loss and Damage is still only being discussed on the sidelines of the international climate negotiations. Although an expert dialogue will take place in May, urgent decisions need to be made now to help countries deal with the losses and damages they are suffering already.

Some resources:

- Here an infographic Climate Tracker prepared to explain what we need on Loss and Damage: <http://climatetracker.org/cop-23-need-know-loss-damage/>
- Here another infographic that summarizes COP23’s outcome on Loss and Damage: <http://climatetracker.org/cop-23-final-call-lossdamage/>
- Here a text analysis of the outcomes at COP: <http://climatetracker.org/cop-23-loss-damage-text-analysis/>
- Everything you want to know about Loss and Damage is here: <http://loss-and-damage.net>
- Great info on loss and damage and climate justice: <https://www.rosalux.de/en/publication/id/9218/loss-and-damage/>

Loss & Damage and Climate Migration



One of the extreme effects climate change can have on people's life, is that it affects their lives so much that it makes them flee or migrate, creating climate displacement.

Some examples from all over the world include:

Lake Chad

Once a vital resource for 4 countries - Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria - Lake Chad has shrunk by more than 90 percent since 1963. The ecological catastrophe has driven many people out of the region, and has played a major role in the Boko Haram insurgency in the region. More than 3.5 million people have fled the area.

China

The country's deserts have expanded by 21,000 square miles since 1975, crowding out cropland and producing devastating sandstorms. The government has resettled hundreds of thousands of "[ecological migrants](#)" — many of them religious or ethnic minorities — from across the affected areas of northern China.

The Philippines

Many climate models predict that warming oceans will make typhoons and tropical storms more intense, raising their destructive potential. Since 2013, nearly 15 million people have been displaced by typhoons and storms in the Philippines. The deadliest of them, [Typhoon Haiyan](#), killed more than 7,000 people.

South Asia, and in particular the low lying region that harbors the Delta's of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna, is a region that is particularly prone to strong climate impacts and subsequent climate migration.

The coastal population already struggle to cope with current climate hazards, including fluvio-tidal floods, tropical cyclones accompanied by storm surges, river bank erosion, salinity intrusion due to seasonal low flow levels in rivers and upstream water diversion, high levels of salinity in groundwater and arsenic contamination of shallow aquifers.

And although the region has planned many adaptations, the current and future **environmental stresses are believed to be driving displacement and forced migration**.

Some more resources:

- [This report](#) by the DECCMA gives a clear overview of the situation in the region.
- [This investigative piece](#) by Megan Darby is one of the best reports on Climate Migration we've read in a long time.
- [This interview](#) of Dr. Saleemul Huq from ICCCAD gives us an expert opinion on the issue of climate migration
- [Climate Outreach](#) are one of the best experts on climate change and migration
- The [Climate and Migration coalition](#) has all resources you need!

Climate Impacts in 5 Asian Countries

India

Some resources about loss and damage in India:

- An [article example](#) on Loss and Damage in India
- [India's Climate Risk](#) and Loss and Damage
- Insights from India on [Loss and Damage at COP23](#)

Some resources about climate migration in India:

- Climate change will [rise migration in India](#)
- [Policy](#) for India's climate migration
- [Women are most affected](#) by climate migration

- Climate migrants to [India's cities](#)
- [Lack of planning](#) for India's climate migrations

Bangladesh

Some resources about loss and damage in Bangladesh:

- Loss and Damage in the [context of Bangladesh](#)
- Lots of resources on [Loss and Damage for vulnerable countries](#)
- [Policy approaches](#) to Loss and Damage

Some resources about climate migration in Bangladesh:

- Piece by The Guardian on [Climate Refugees in Dhaka](#)
- A long piece by Climate Home on [climate migrants in Bangladesh](#)
- [Internal migration](#) in Bangladesh due to climate change
- [Policies that could be implemented](#) regarding climate and migration
- [International Organisation on Migration](#)'s take on Bangladesh
- Too early to talk about [climate refugees](#)?

Vietnam

Some resources about loss and damage in Vietnam:

- Some ideas of [loss and damage impacts in Vietnam](#)
- [Capacity building for Loss and Damage](#) in Vietnam

Some resources about climate migration in Vietnam:

- A [research paper](#) by UNDP on climate migration in Vietnam
- Research on [climate migration to Russia](#)
- [General data and further links](#) on climate migration in Vietnam
- Report on [climate change adaptation through migration](#) in Vietnam
- How [migration intensifies climate change](#) in Vietnam
- Study about [climate migration](#) in the country

Philippines

Some resources about loss and damage in the Philippines:

- How Loss and Damage compensation can be [found in the Philippines' national pledge](#)
- An [analysis of the outcomes at COP23](#) from an ASEAN perspective
- The relationship between [gender, loss and damage, and conflict](#)
- The outcomes of this year's COP from a [Philippines perspective](#)
- Research on [community perceptions of loss and damage](#) in the Philippines
- An old publication about [Loss and Damage and Typhoon Hayan](#) to get some context
- [Anniversary of Hayan](#) piece and Loss and Damage at COP23

Some resources about climate migration in the Philippines:

- Research on [climate and migration](#) in the Philippines
- Stories of [climate migrants](#) from the Philippines

Indonesia

Some resources about loss and damage in the Indonesia:

- [Pre-COP23 analysis](#) on Loss and Damage in the region
- [An overview](#) of the risks Indonesia is facing

Some resources about climate migration in the Indonesia:

- Examples of [climate migration in Indonesia](#)
- More [examples of climate migration](#)
- Indonesia and [“climate refugees”](#)
- [Unicef study](#) explaining the effect of Climate Change on migration in Indonesia